



**Liquor & Tobacco Advisory Board Agenda  
Tuesday, December 21, 2021  
6:00 P.M. – City Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall  
425 East State Street  
Rockford, IL 61104  
779-348-7163**

**Present:**

**ZBA Members:**

Jennifer Spencer  
Craig Sockwell  
Jennifer Smith  
Dan Roszkowski  
Kim Johnsen

**Absent:**

Maurice Redd  
Tom Fabiano

**Staff**

Megan McNeill – Assistant City Attorney  
Brenda Muniz- Land Use Planner  
Scott Capovilla - Planning and Zoning Manager  
Mike Rotolo- Fire Prevention Coordinator  
Jeremy Carter - Traffic Engineer

**Others:**

Camille Connell – Court Reporter (Planet Depos)  
Janessa Wilkins – Alderman  
Tuffy Quinonez – Alderman  
Applicants and Interested Parties

---

Scott Capovilla explained the format of the meeting will follow the Boards Rules of Procedure generally outlined as:

The Chairman will call the address of the application.

- The Applicant or representative will come forward and be sworn in.
- The Applicant or representative will present their request before the Board
- The Board will ask any questions they may have regarding this application.
- The Chairman will then ask if there are any Objectors or Interested Parties. Objectors or Interested Parties are to come forward at that time, be sworn in by the Chairman, and give their name to the Liquor & Tobacco Advisory Board secretary and the stenographer
- The Objector or Interested Party will present all their concerns, objections and questions to the Applicant regarding the application.

- The Board will ask any questions they may have of the Objector or Interested Party.
- The Applicant will have an opportunity to rebut the concerns/questions of the Objector or Interested Party
- No further discussion from the Objector or Interested Party will occur after the rebuttal of the Applicant.
- The Board will then discuss the application and a vote will be taken.

The LTAB meeting is not a final vote on any item. However, it is the only time in which the public may participate. After the LTAB meeting, the item moves on to the Code & Regulation Committee. Although the public is invited to attend the meeting, public input is not allowed at the committee meeting. The date of the Code & Regulation meeting will be Monday, January 10, 2022 at 5:30 PM in City Council Chambers (2nd floor of City Hall) as the second vote on these items. The third and final meeting in this process is the City Council. That vote is tentatively scheduled on Tuesday, January 18, 2022. If the item is laid over at the LTAB meeting, the next meeting is **Wednesday, January 19, 2022**. If for any reason the item is laid over at the committee level or on the city council floor, the item is automatically laid over for two (2) weeks.

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM. A **MOTION** was made by Kim Johnsen to **APPROVE** the November 16, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was **SECONDED** by Craig Sockwell and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

#### **21-LTAB-024**

Applicant  
Ward 11

#### **309 and 311 7th Street**

Eclectic Event Planning LLC / Clareisa Schwartz dba Eclectic Event Planning  
**The sale of liquor** by the drink in conjunction with an event space with video gaming in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District  
**Laid over from October and November's meeting**

The Applicant, Clareisa Schwartz was present. She indicated that she had been before the board for the same request and because of the pandemic it was put on hold. However, now she wants to move forward with opening the business.

Attorney Megan McNeill asked the Applicant if she had reviewed the staff recommendation and the conditions of approval and if she was in agreement. Ms. Schwartz indicated that she agreed to the conditions.

Kim Johnsen asked if she had seen the denial of the sale of liquor by the drink in conjunction with an event space and video gaming. Ms. Schwartz responded that she had and that it was not the focus of the business and was in agreement. The focus of the business is to book events.

Craig Sockwell asked the Applicant if the business would be open everyday. The Applicant indicated that it would only be during booked events.

Ms. Johnsen asked when the business was scheduled to open. Ms. Schwartz indicated that as of yet, there were no events booked. Additionally, she would not sign a lease until she could secure a liquor license.

No objectors or interested parties were present.

A **MOTION** was made by Jennifer Smith to **APPROVE** the application for **the sale of liquor** by the drink in conjunction with an event space and **DENIAL** of the sale of liquor by the drink in conjunction with an event space with video gaming in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District. The motion was **SECONDED** by Kim Johnsen and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

Approval is based on the following conditions:

1. Must meet all applicable Building and Fire codes.
2. Compliance with all City of Rockford Code of Ordinances including Liquor Codes.
3. The sale of liquor by the drink shall be limited to submitted Exhibit F.
4. The hours of operation will be limited to 8:00 AM to Midnight (12:00 AM).
5. The proposed use and facility is prohibited from having any video gaming machines.
6. The windows shall not be covered with bars or other devices that block the windows.
7. Window display signage is limited to 20% of window area.
8. The event space shall not operate as a nightclub.
9. Private security will be employed for events open to the public and for the proposed live entertainment.
10. Any pending general ordinance case(s) must be resolved prior to issuance of the license.
11. All outstanding general ordinance fines must be paid prior to the issuance of the license.
12. All conditions must be met prior to establishment of use.

**21-LTAB-030**

Applicant  
Ward 11

**1201 Broadway**

Blackprint Enterprises, LLC dba Xquisites Bar & Grill

**Modification of an existing liquor license** to include karaoke nights, comedy nights, open mic nights, and live entertainment to include DJs in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District

The Applicant or a representative was not present. Scott Capovilla indicated that the Applicant had dropped off an addendum on Monday and a copy was provided to the board members. Mr. Capovilla had no idea why the Applicant was not present. The board members briefly discussed and decided it was best to lay this item over to the following month.

A **MOTION** was made by Jennifer Smith to **LAYOVER** the application for **Modification of an existing liquor license** to include karaoke nights, comedy nights, open mic nights, and live entertainment to include DJs in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District. The motion was **SECONDED** by Jennifer Spencer and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

**21-LTAB-031**

Applicant  
Ward 6

**3015, 3017, and 30XX Kishwaukee Street**

Thomas Charles McDonald dba Grant Park Tavern

**The sale of liquor by the drink** in conjunction with a tavern and video gaming terminals in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District

Dan Roszkowski indicated that prior to the meeting, the Legal Department requested a layover.

A **MOTION** was made by Jennifer Smith to **LAYOVER** the application for the **sale of liquor by the drink** in conjunction with a tavern and video gaming terminals in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District. The motion was **SECONDED** by Jennifer Spencer and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

**21-LTAB-032**

Applicant  
Ward 7

**3605 Auburn Street**

Alvino Vela / Tacos El Toro, LLC dba Tacos El Toro

**The sale of liquor by the drink** in conjunction with a restaurant, video gaming terminals and an outdoor smoking area in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District

The Applicant, Alvino Vela, was present. He indicated that he was present to request a liquor license.

Attorney McNeill asked the Applicant if he had a chance to review the staff recommendation and the conditions of approval and if he were in agreement. Mr. Vela responded that he had but had questions about the conditions specifically condition 5. He asked if there were video gaming machines available would he then be able to get the machines. Mr. Vela indicated that he didn't think it was fair. He asked about condition 8 and said he did not agree to the conditions. He felt that live entertainment went with the Mexican cultural and it would bring more business as well as the gaming machines. He would like to be able to have a live Mariachi band while customers ate their food. Mr. Vela indicated that he was not trying to turn the establishment into a nightclub and agreed with no dance floor. However, he would like to be able to have live entertainment such as a DJ because it fits the Mexican cultural and again did not want to do a nightclub. He just wanted to have the option for customers to be able to listen to music and eat good food. This is not something that would be during late hours of the night and only wants to be similar to how San Jose Taqueria Restaurant has live entertainment.

Attorney McNeill asked the Applicant if there were any other conditions besides these two conditions that he did not agree with. Mr. Vela indicated that the other one would be the landscaping condition. He did not receive a memo from staff on what was being requested for landscaping. Mr. Vela had heard about the free-standing sign and that was not an issue but the landscaping was not clear. The existing parking lot is all pavement and there is no room for landscaping. He would hate to break up concrete to install landscaping but if they wanted to tell him exactly what was being requesting then he would work with it. In his opinion, the condition of the site works better for his business.

Attorney McNeill wanted to clarify to the Applicant that if this item was approved by the board and City Council, all these conditions would need to be satisfied. Mr. Vela responded that yes he understands that the conditions would need to be satisfied but wanted to know how would that work with the conditions that were brought up. Attorney McNeill indicated that it would be up to the Liquor and Tobacco Advisory Board to make changes.

Jennifer Spencer asked Mr. Vela for clarification of what was meant by live entertainment and if it was only a Mariachi band. Mr. Vela responded that it would be and that it would be about 5 or 6 person band and it would not be a rock n roll band just playing music. There might be a person singing with the Mariachi band to entertain the customers at the restaurant. The goal is for customers to enjoy music.

Ms. Spencer asked about the DJ and what was meant by his request to allow a DJ. Mr. Vela indicated that a person could do Karaoke with a DJ so it would be a DJ/Karaoke type of setup. A person could request to sing a song and have the ability to sing it and have fun. He indicated that San Jose Taqueria Restaurant has this type of entertainment on Friday nights and it brings entertainment to the customers. Mr. Vela further indicated that not having a DJ would limit their ability to entertain.

Ms. Spencer asked how long the business had been opened. Mr. Vela indicated that they had been open for two years.

Staff Recommendation was for approval. One objector was present.

William Pritz, an adjacent property owner, was present as an objector. Mr. Pritz indicated that he owns Central Park Tap and his business consists of a kitchen, bar with attached liquor store and gaming. He is concerned with creating a congestion of video gaming so close to each other. He was concerned with drinking and customers walking between both establishments. He did not have an outdoor area and he will never have an outdoor area. He is concerned that people will climb over fences to go between the establishments to get drinks. Besides those issues, Mr. Pritz said the restaurant is great and has great food. He encourage people to try it. Mr. Vela responded that he did not feel that he would not be taking business from the adjacent business.

Alderman Janessa Wilkins was present to support the request and asked the board to support it as well. She indicated that she has been to the business and has met the restaurant staff. She has never encountered issues nor had any complaints in the two years that it has been in business.

Mr. Vela responded by thanking the Alderman for her support and also wanted to tell the board that the intention is run a small business and make ends meet. They would like to bring in revenue for the City. He is just trying to run a small successful business and would appreciate their support.

The board moved to discussion. Ms. Spencer was Ok with the gaming prohibition at this time but had an issue on the wording. Ms. Spencer wanted to know if they could re-apply for gaming in the future. Attorney McNeill indicated that if there were licenses, the Applicant would have an option to request a modification of their existing liquor license.

Kim Johnsen asked staff to clarify the Pre-annexation number of gaming machines and how that affects the total permitted. She asked if it would mean that once it became part of the City of Rockford then it would count. Megan McNeill responded that it would per the City Ordinance.

Ms. Spencer asked if there was timeline on the Pre-annexations or if they could get an annexed at any time. Scott Capovilla responded that the properties could be annexed at any time and the businesses with gaming could come in within the next 2 to 3 years.

Ms. Spencer asked staff to clarify the difference between live entertainment and DJ. Mr. Capovilla responded that a DJ is someone is spinning music and live entertainment is someone performing music with music instruments.

The board moved to discussion and decided that they were in agreement with the Applicant to remove condition 8.

A **MOTION** was made by Kim Johnsen to **APPROVE** the application for the sale of liquor by the drink in conjunction with a restaurant and an outdoor smoking area and **DENIAL** of the sale of liquor by the drink in conjunction with a restaurant, video gaming terminals and an outdoor smoking area in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District. The motion was **SECONDED** by Jennifer Spencer and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

Approval is based on the following conditions:

1. Meet all applicable Building and Fire Codes.
2. Compliance with all City of Rockford Code of Ordinances including Liquor Codes.
3. The sale of liquor by the drink shall be in conjunction with a restaurant and limited to submitted Exhibit E.
4. The hours of operation shall be limited to Monday through Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight).
5. The proposed use and facility is prohibited from having any video gaming machines.
6. The proposed use shall not have a cover charge.
7. The proposed use shall not have a dance floor.
8. The proposed use shall not have any DJs.
9. The proposed use shall not operate as a nightclub.
10. Submittal of a revised site plan and landscape plan for staff's review and approval and installation by May 1, 2022.
11. Must remove existing free-standing sign and replace with a landmark style sign by May 1, 2022.
12. Any pending general ordinance case(s) must be resolved prior to issuance of the license.
13. All outstanding general ordinance fines must be paid prior to issuance of the license.
14. All conditions must be met prior to establishment of use.

A **MOTION** was made by Kim Johnsen to **APPROVE** the new Liquor and Tobacco Advisory Board 2022 schedule. The motion was **SECONDED** by Craig Sockwell and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Muniz, Land Use Planner  
Liquor & Tobacco Advisory Board